United Nations CEDAW/C/ERI/CO/5

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

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Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Concluding observations on the fourth and fifth periodic reports of Eritrea*

1. The Committee considered the fourth and fifth periodic reports of Eritrea (CEDAW/C/ERI/4 and CEDAW/C/ERI/5) at its 1291st and 1292nd meetings, on 26 February 2015 (see CEDAW/C/SR.1291 and 1292). The Committee's list of issues and questions is contained in CEDAW/C/ERI/Q/5 and the responses of Eritrea are contained in CEDAW/C/ERI/Q/5/Add.1.

A. Introduction

2. The Committee appreciates that the State party submitted its fourth and fifth periodic reports. It also appreciates the State party's written replies to the list of issues and questions raised by the pre-sessional working group and welcomes the oral presentation of the delegation and the further clarifications provided in response to the questions posed orally by the Committee during the dialogue.

3. The Committee commends the State party for its delegation, which was headed by the President of the National Union of Eritrean Women, Tekea Tesfamichael, and included representatives of the Ministry of Transport and Communications, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the National Union of Eritrean Women and the Permanent Mission of Eritrea to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva.

B. Positive aspects

4. The Committee welcomes the progress achieved since the consideration in 2006 of the State party's combined initial, second and third periodic reports (CEDAW/C/ERI/1-3 and Corr.1) in undertaking legislative reforms, in particular the adoption in 2007 of Proclamation No. 158/2007 to abolish female circumcision.

* Adopted by the Committee at its sixtieth session (16 February-6 March 2015).

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5. The Committee also welcomes the fact that, in the period since the consideration of the previous report, the State party has ratified or acceded to the following international instruments:

(a) Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, in 2014;

(b) United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the Convention, in 2014.

C. Factors and difficulties preventing the effective implementation of the Convention

6. The Committee considers that the indefinite period of national service, the ineffective implementation of the Constitution of 1997 and the suspension of the National Assembly have resulted in a deterioration of the rule of law and in a serious refugee crisis, which pose a challenge to the implementation of the Convention. The Committee therefore urges the State party to implement the recommendations made herein as a matter of high priority.

D. Principal areas of concern and recommendations

National Assembly

7. **The Committee stresses the crucial role of the legislative power in ensuring the full implementation of the Convention (see the statement by the Committee on its relationship with parliamentarians, adopted at the forty-fifth session, in 2010). It urges the State party to reconvene the National Assembly so that it may, in line with its mandate, take the necessary steps regarding the implementation of the present concluding observations between now and the next reporting period under the Convention.**

Women's rights in the context of national service and the refugee crisis

8. The Committee is deeply concerned about the negative impact of the indefinite period of national service on women's rights and at the insufficient measures taken by the State party to remedy the situation. It is particularly concerned about:

(a) Women and girls being forcibly recruited into national service for an indefinite period and without formal pay, under conditions amounting to forced labour;

(b) Reports that women performing national service are frequently victims of sexual violence, including rape, committed by officers and male recruits and that women who refuse sexual advances are often severely punished;

(c) The large and increasing number of Eritrean women and girls, including unaccompanied children, who flee the country and become refugees to avoid national service and who frequently become victims of violence, human trafficking and smuggling;

(d) Reports that many girls drop out of school, become pregnant and/or are forced to enter into child marriages to avoid enrolment at the Sawa Military Training Centre and national service;

(e) The proliferation of small arms and the accessibility of firearms by individuals in the framework of national service and the impact of that situation on the security of women.

9. **The Committee urges the State party:**

(a) **To discontinue the indefinite period of national service and the forced enrolment at the Sawa Military Training Centre, put measures in place to end all violation of girls' rights, reduce the national service obligation to the original 18 months, legally recognize the right to conscientious objection and ensure that women who have completed their service are immediately demobilized and supported in their reintegration process;**

(b) **To prevent, investigate, prosecute in criminal courts and punish all cases of violence against women and girls during their national service and at the Sawa Military Training Centre, implement a policy of zero tolerance and provide legal aid, rehabilitation programmes and compensation to victims;**

(c) **To protect women and children, in particular unaccompanied children, who are fleeing the country from violence, human trafficking and smuggling;**

(d) **To provide adequate support to girls in child marriages who have dropped out of school and facilitate their reintegration into education;**

(e) **To enact and strictly enforce legislation regulating the trade, sale and possession of small arms and set processes in place to ratify the Arms Trade Treaty.**

Legislative framework

10. The Committee is concerned that the failure to implement the Constitution of 1997 effectively has had a negative impact on women's rights and the rule of law. While noting the plans of the State party to review the Constitution, the Committee regrets the lack of information provided on the time frame and modalities for such reform. In view of the State party's dualist system, the Committee remains concerned that the provisions of the Convention have not yet been incorporated into national law and, as a result, are not enforceable in the national courts.

11. **The Committee reiterates its previous recommendations (see CEDAW/C/ERI/CO/3, paras. 7 and 11) and urges the State party:**

(a) **To ensure the effective implementation of the Constitution of 1997 and expedite the planned constitutional review process, within a clear time frame and with transparent procedures, taking into account the views of all women and girls, including those belonging to disadvantaged groups, those holding divergent opinions and women in exile;**

(b) **To ensure that the provisions of the Convention, including a definition of discrimination against women in line with article 1, are duly incorporated into national law and enforceable in the national courts.**

Access to justice

12. The Committee is deeply concerned about the numerous obstacles faced by women and girls in gaining access to justice. It is also concerned about the lack of measures taken by the State party to eliminate those obstacles and to ensure the independence, professionalism and gender sensitivity of the judiciary at all levels.

13. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Design a comprehensive judicial policy to eliminate the institutional, social, economic, technological and other barriers faced by women and girls in obtaining access to justice and provide adequate resources and a monitoring mechanism for its implementation;**

(b) **Initiate fundamental reforms to ensure that the judiciary is impartial, professional, gender sensitive and independent, in particular from the Government and the military, as a means of safeguarding the enjoyment of women's rights;**

(c) **Ensure that women who are victims of sex- and gender-based discrimination have access to effective redress and facilitate their access to legal aid;**

(d) **Ensure that all cases of violence and discrimination against women covered by the Convention are brought under the jurisdiction of criminal, rather than military, courts, including when violations of the law are committed by members of the military or public officials;**

(e) **Enhance women's awareness of their rights and their legal literacy in all areas of the law with a view to empowering women to avail themselves of procedures and remedies for claiming their rights under the Convention;**

(f) **Provide capacity-building training on women's rights and gender equality to judges, prosecutors, police officers, lawyers and traditional and religious leaders.**

National machinery for the advancement of women

14. The Committee commends the achievements of the National Union of Eritrean Women in promoting women's rights. It regrets, however, that the State party has not yet changed the Union's legal status as a non-governmental organization nor provided it with executive powers, which impedes the Union's ability to respond to the current challenges effectively. The Committee is also concerned about the insufficient human and financial resources allocated to the national machinery to ensure that it functions adequately.

15. **The Committee reiterates its previous recommendation (see CEDAW/C/ERI/CO/3, para. 13) that the State party strengthen the National Union of Eritrean Women by giving it executive powers, ensuring that its composition is inclusive and reinforcing its ability to provide for horizontal coordination and interaction with civil society organizations, so that it may respond adequately to the current challenges. The Committee also recommends that the State party allocate adequate human and financial resources to the national machinery and assess the impact of its activities regularly.**

Temporary special measures

16. The Committee notes that the State party has continued to apply temporary special measures to ensure that women are represented in legislative and judicial bodies. It is concerned, however, at reports that those measures benefit only women affiliated with the political party in power. The Committee is also concerned that the State party does not use temporary special measures systematically to accelerate the achievement of substantive or de facto equality between women and men in all areas covered by the Convention. It is further concerned about the insufficient temporary special measures aimed at addressing inequalities faced by such disadvantaged groups of women as rural women.

17. **The Committee calls upon the State party to increase the use of temporary special measures, in accordance with article 4 (1) of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendation No. 25 on the subject, as a necessary strategy for accelerating the achievement of substantive equality between women and men, in particular to enhance the rights of rural women, older women and women with disabilities, and in all areas covered by the Convention in which women are underrepresented or disadvantaged. The temporary special measures used, in particular quotas, should be available to all women, irrespective of their political affiliation.**

Stereotypes and harmful practices

18. The Committee notes the efforts made by the State party to eliminate stereotypes and harmful practices, such as the adoption of Proclamation No. 158/2007 to abolish female circumcision. It nevertheless remains deeply concerned about the persistence of patriarchal attitudes and deep-rooted stereotypes regarding the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the family and in society. It also remains concerned that female genital mutilation remains prevalent, in particular in rural areas. The Committee is further concerned about the prevalence of child marriage and the fact that polygamy persists in some Muslim communities.

19. **The Committee urges the State party:**

(a) **To expeditiously adopt a comprehensive strategy to eliminate stereotypes and harmful practices that discriminate against women, such as female genital mutilation, child marriage, polygamy and unequal inheritance rights for women;**

(b) **To strengthen efforts to enforce Proclamation No. 158/2007 to abolish female circumcision and ensure that perpetrators of female genital mutilation are prosecuted and adequately punished and the victims compensated;**

(c) **To reinforce awareness-raising programmes, targeting children, men and women, including officials at all levels, teachers, parents and traditional and religious leaders, on the harmful effects and criminal nature of all such practices and on the negative impact of discriminatory stereotypes on women's enjoyment of their rights.**

Violence against women

20. The Committee is deeply concerned about reports that violence against women and girls is widespread in the State party, in particular in the domestic sphere, in

educational institutions and in the context of national service. It remains particularly concerned:

(a) That the State party has not yet adopted comprehensive legislation that explicitly criminalizes all forms of violence against women, including marital rape;

(b) That traditional and religious leaders often mediate in domestic violence cases;

(c) That alleged perpetrators of sexual violence against women in the context of national service are rarely prosecuted;

(d) That no specific evidentiary, medical and forensic procedures exist to address cases of violence against women;

(e) That no information has been provided on mechanisms of redress, rehabilitation and compensation for women who are victims of violence and on assistance to and protection of witnesses;

(f) That there are insufficient statistical data on violence against women, disaggregated by age and the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator.

21. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Adopt a comprehensive policy and legislation explicitly criminalizing all forms of physical, psychological, economic and sexual violence against women, including marital rape. The law should also provide for protection orders to be issued against abusive partners;**

(b) **Ensure that women have effective access to justice by establishing confidential and gender-sensitive complaint mechanisms and legal aid programmes;**

(c) **Ensure that alleged perpetrators of violence against women, including domestic violence and sexual violence, are duly prosecuted by a competent criminal court, witnesses are assisted and protected and victims are compensated, and that mediation is not given preference over criminal proceedings in domestic violence cases;**

(d) **Develop evidentiary, medical and forensic procedures for documenting and prosecuting cases of violence against women, including sexual and domestic violence;**

(e) **Strengthen services for women and girls who are victims of violence, including by establishing shelters in all regions of the State party and ensuring the availability of psychosocial rehabilitation and reintegration programmes;**

(f) **Provide capacity-building on violence against women to professional groups, including members of the military and religious and traditional leaders, and conduct awareness-raising campaigns targeting children, teachers, the media and the general public;**

(g) **Establish a reliable system for the collection of statistical data on violence against women, disaggregated by age, forms of violence and the relationship the between victim and the perpetrator, and on the number of complaints, prosecutions, convictions and sentences imposed on perpetrators as well as on reparations provided to victims.**

Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution

22. The Committee welcomes the State party's ratification of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (Palermo Protocol). It is concerned, however, about reports that numerous women and girls, including unaccompanied children, who are fleeing the country become victims of human trafficking and smuggling. The Committee regrets the lack of a comprehensive law and policy on trafficking and the fact that most traffickers enjoy impunity. While noting the measures taken to protect women in prostitution, the Committee is concerned at the various forms of discrimination that they face and at the absence of information on the impact of existing rehabilitation programmes for women wishing to leave prostitution and on the number of prosecutions of those who exploit prostitution.

23. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Conduct a study to investigate the extent and root causes of trafficking in women and girls as well as the exploitation of women and girls in prostitution;**

(b) **Urgently adopt comprehensive legislation and a national policy and strategy on trafficking in persons, with a gender perspective and in accordance with the Palermo Protocol;**

(c) **Take effective measures to prevent trafficking, including through early identification and warning systems, and ensure that travel documents and cooperation with regional agencies and neighbouring countries allow safe passage for women and girls who wish to leave the country;**

(d) **Ensure that traffickers and pimps are prosecuted and adequately punished, and provide free legal aid, shelters and psychosocial support to women and children, in particular unaccompanied children, who are victims of trafficking;**

(e) **Provide training on trafficking and gender-sensitive victim identification methods to judges, prosecutors, police officers, border guards and other professional groups;**

(f) **Increase cooperation with countries of transit and destination and international organizations in order to prevent trafficking through information exchange and harmonize legal procedures aimed at the prosecution and conviction of traffickers;**

(g) **Evaluate the impact of rehabilitation and reintegration programmes for women in prostitution and those who wish to leave prostitution and, on the basis of the results, take measures to strengthen those programmes, including by allocating adequate resources.**

Participation in political and public life

24. The Committee notes the measures taken to increase the participation of women in regional assemblies, community courts and the civil service, but is concerned that women remain underrepresented in senior government positions and at reports that the measures taken benefit only women sharing the views of the political party in power. It is also concerned that, in practice, women have been

unable to vote and run as candidates for the National Assembly in free and fair elections since the State party gained independence in 1991. The Committee is further concerned at the lack of independent women's associations operating in the State party and regrets that the State party has not yet adopted a national action plan to implement Security Council resolution 1325 (2000).

25. **In line with its general recommendation No. 23 on women in political and public life, the Committee urges the State party:**

(a) **To expeditiously hold free and fair elections to the National Assembly and other elected bodies, ensuring that all women, including those from disadvantaged groups and those holding divergent opinions, can vote and stand for election;**

(b) **To strengthen efforts to ensure that women have equal representation in the Government, in particular at high levels of decision-making, in legislative assemblies, in the judiciary and in the civil service, at the national, regional and local levels;**

(c) **To intensify the use of effective temporary special measures, including statutory quotas with sanctions for non-compliance, in accordance with article 4 (1) of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendation No. 25 on the subject, to promote the equal representation of women in political and public life, in particular in elected and appointed political positions and in the judiciary, targeting decision-making levels;**

(d) **To create an enabling environment and a regulatory framework to ensure that women's associations can be established and operate freely in the State party;**

(e) **To adopt, in cooperation with representatives of women's organizations, a national action plan to implement Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and ensure that it takes into consideration the full spectrum of the Council's women and peace and security agenda as reflected in Council resolutions 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009) and 2122 (2013).**

Nationality

26. The Committee commends the State party for its nationality legislation and notes that almost all births in hospitals are registered. It is concerned, however, about the persistent challenges to registering children in rural areas, which places them at risk of statelessness and may limit their access to education, health and other basic services.

27. **The Committee calls upon the State party to institute comprehensive mechanisms to ensure that all children born in the State party, in particular in rural areas, are registered at birth, as a means of preventing statelessness and to ensure their access to citizenship and education, health and other basic services.**

Education

28. While the Committee notes the efforts made by the State party to promote access by girls and women to education, in particular the increased enrolment of girls in primary and secondary education, it is concerned:

(a) That the enrolment of girls remains low, in particular in rural areas, and that the dropout rate of girls continues to be high;

(b) That the number of schools is insufficient, in particular in rural areas;

(c) That the number of female teachers remains extremely low, which may be a deterrent to girls attending school;

(d) That, some improvements notwithstanding, women continue to be underrepresented in vocational, technical and higher education and have low progression rates;

(e) That the State party has not taken measures to prevent and address sexual violence against girls in schools.

29. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Strengthen measures to ensure that girls and young women have de facto equal access to all levels of education and to reduce the rate at which girls drop out of education, including by addressing barriers such as negative cultural attitudes and excessive domestic duties;**

(b) **Reduce disparities in access to education between urban and rural areas, including by increasing the number of schools in rural areas;**

(c) **Strengthen measures to increase the number of female teachers and address the underrepresentation of women in vocational and higher education, including by providing girls with career counselling that orients them towards non-traditional career paths, in particular in technical and vocational areas, and put measures in place to address the low progression rates of girls and report on those measures in the next periodic report;**

(d) **Develop policies that prohibit sexual abuse and harassment in school and ensure that the perpetrators of such incidents do not enjoy impunity but are duly prosecuted and appropriately punished.**

30. The Committee reiterates its concern that all high school students, including girls, must enrol for their twelfth grade at the Sawa Military Training Centre, where they undergo stringent military training and are at risk of being subjected to violence. The Committee is also concerned at reports that many girls drop out of school, become pregnant, marry or flee the country to avoid such enrolment.

31. **The Committee urges the State party:**

(a) **To discontinue the forced enrolment of high school students at the Sawa Military Training Centre and ensure that students in the twelfth grade have the option to receive education at civilian high schools with regular teachers, by increasing capacity at that level in those schools;**

(b) **To ensure that all alleged perpetrators of violence against girls at the Sawa Military Training Centre are prosecuted and punished and that victims are adequately compensated.**

Employment

32. The Committee notes the measures taken by the State party to facilitate women's access to employment, in particular self-employment, but is concerned that women

are concentrated in non-skilled and low-paid jobs. It is also concerned that the labour legislation does not explicitly incorporate the principle of equal pay for work of equal value or prohibit sexual harassment in the workplace. It also regrets the insufficient information provided on the labour inspections undertaken to date. The Committee reiterates its concern that women and girls are recruited into national service for an indefinite period without formal pay, which amounts to forced labour.

33. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Take effective measures to tackle the occupational segregation of women and men in the labour market;**

(b) **Amend the Labour Proclamation (No. 118/2001) to include the principle of equal pay for work of equal value and criminalize sexual harassment;**

(c) **Provide information in its next periodic report on the number, nature and results of the labour inspections conducted, including in the fields of agriculture and domestic work;**

(d) **Ensure that the conditions of national service comply with the Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105), of the International Labour Organization and other international standards, including by providing adequate pay.**

Health

34. The Committee notes the efforts made by the State party to improve the health situation of its population, but notes with concern:

(a) The high rate of maternal mortality, notwithstanding the State party's official achievement of Millennium Development Goals 4 and 5 on child and maternal mortality, respectively;

(b) That malnutrition remains a leading cause of infant mortality and that there are frequent reports of food production shortages;

(c) The low budget allocated to the health sector, which is below the regional average, and the insufficient number of trained doctors and midwives;

(d) The high number of early pregnancies;

(e) The lack of specific guidelines on safe abortion procedures;

(f) The extremely low rate of use of modern contraceptives.

35. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Further reduce maternal mortality by ensuring the provision of adequate sexual and reproductive health services, including access to antenatal, delivery and postnatal services. In this regard, the State party is encouraged to consider the technical guidance on the application of a human rights-based approach to the implementation of policies and programmes to reduce preventable maternal morbidity and mortality (A/HRC/21/22 and Corr.1 and 2), prepared by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights;**

(b) **Ensure that all women and children have access to adequate nutrition, including by increasing efforts to address the food production shortages, and seek international assistance to that effect;**

(c) Increase the budget allocated to health care and the number of trained health-care providers and medical personnel, including midwives, in particular in rural areas;

(d) Reduce the number of teenage pregnancies by ensuring access to age-appropriate information and education on sexual and reproductive health and rights for girls and boys;

(e) Adopt specific guidelines on safe abortion procedures that regulate access to safe abortion in the exceptional cases included in the Penal Code and ensure that safe and confidential abortion and post-abortion services are available;

(f) Provide adequate access to affordable, modern methods of contraception, including emergency contraception, to all women and girls.

Economic empowerment of women

36. The Committee notes the measures taken to promote the participation of women in economic life, including the provision of microcredit, but remains concerned:

(a) That the implementation of women's equal right to land is hampered by the bias of land distribution committees against the exercise of that right by women and the fact that the right to land of married women is in practice often exercised by their husbands;

(b) That sharia is applied in inheritance cases in Muslim communities, under which a woman's share of land is half of that to which a man is entitled;

(c) That the position of women in polygamous marriages is uncertain in this regard, given that husbands may register land under the name of only one of the wives;

(d) That women farmers continue to face discrimination in terms of access to agricultural services and technologies;

(e) That women's economic empowerment initiatives have not been adequately mainstreamed within development programmes and that gender equality issues have not been effectively included in policy dialogues with international organizations.

37. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) Strengthen efforts to fully implement Proclamation No. 58/1994 on land tenure, including by providing training on women's right to land to the village land committees and by effectively monitoring the implementation of the Proclamation and ensuring a gender balance in the composition of the committees;

(b) Ensure that Muslim women and girls, including those in polygamous marriages, enjoy the same access to land and productive resources as men;

(c) Facilitate women's access to productive land, agricultural training and extension services, credit, seeds, tools and other resources necessary for making their farming practices sustainable and productive, and review the impact of those measures;

(d) **Ensure that women's empowerment initiatives are adequately mainstreamed within development programmes and that issues relating to gender equality are effectively included in policy dialogues with international organizations.**

Rural women

38. The Committee welcomes the measures taken to improve the situation of rural women, but is concerned that rural women and girls have limited access to education, health and employment. It is also concerned that insufficient measures have been taken to ensure their participation in decision-making processes relating to issues that are of concern to them.

39. **The Committee recommends that the State party adopt a comprehensive strategy, which includes temporary special measures, to adequately address the situation and needs of women and girls living in rural areas. Special attention should be given to their access to education, health, justice, employment, economic opportunities, land tenure, credit facilities and political participation, in particular as regards rural development. The State party should also ensure that rural women are represented in decision-making processes relating to emerging activities such as the mining sector and its impact on the environment and women's livelihoods.**

Women in detention

40. The Committee is concerned about reports that women in detention, including secret detention, are subjected to multiple forms of violence, including sexual violence, by male guards and that cases are not adequately prosecuted. It notes with concern that there is no independent monitoring body in place to visit places of detention.

41. **The Committee recommends that the State party protect women in detention from violence, in particular sexual violence, including by:**

(a) **Ensuring that gender-sensitive complaint mechanisms are available to women who are victims of sexual and other forms of violence in detention;**

(b) **Ensuring that women are under the supervision of female guards in all places of detention and that all guards are provided with mandatory gender-sensitive training on women's rights;**

(c) **Ensuring that conditions in detention centres comply with international standards, in particular the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules), as regards access to health services, including sexual and reproductive health services, nutrition and hygiene;**

(d) **Providing independent bodies, including international organizations and United Nations special procedures mandate holders, with access to all women's detention facilities.**

Marriage and family relations

42. The Committee is concerned that, although the minimum age for marriage is set at 18 years, child marriage remains prevalent in the State party. It is also

concerned that discriminatory provisions of family law are implemented in Muslim communities with respect to issues concerning marriage, divorce and inheritance, including provisions that allow polygamous marriages.

43. **In line with article 16 (2) of the Convention, the Committee's general recommendation No. 21 on equality in marriage and family relations and joint general recommendation No. 31 of the Committee/general comment No. 18 of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on harmful practices, the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Ensure that the minimum age of marriage, set at 18 years of age, is strictly enforced; that in no circumstances can a child under 16 years of age be married; and that marriages of girls from 16 years of age but under 18 years of age can be authorized only by a competent court in cases strictly defined by law and with the full, free and informed consent of the girl concerned;**

(b) **Harmonize the implementation of family law with the Convention to ensure that Muslim women and girls enjoy the same rights as men in marriage, divorce and inheritance, in line with the Committee's general recommendation No. 29 on article 16 of the Convention (economic consequences of marriage, family relations and their dissolution);**

(c) **Reinforce the prohibition of polygamous marriages without exception, including polygamous marriages under sharia.**

Optional Protocol and amendment to article 20 (1) of the Convention

44. **The Committee encourages the State party to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention and to accept, as soon as possible, the amendment to article 20 (1) of the Convention concerning the meeting time of the Committee.**

Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

45. **The Committee calls upon the State party to use the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in its efforts to implement the provisions of the Convention.**

Millennium Development Goals and the post-2015 development framework

46. **The Committee calls for the integration of a gender perspective, in accordance with the provisions of the Convention, into all efforts aimed at the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and into the post-2015 development framework.**

Dissemination

47. **The Committee recalls the obligation of the State party to systematically and continuously implement the provisions of the Convention. It urges the State party to give priority attention to the implementation of the present concluding observations and recommendations between now and the submission of the next periodic report. The Committee therefore requests that the present concluding observations be disseminated in a timely manner, in the official languages of the State party, to the relevant State institutions at all levels (national, regional and local), in particular to the Government, the ministries, the National Assembly, which is to reconvene, and to the judiciary, to enable their full implementation. It**

encourages the State party to collaborate with all stakeholders concerned, such as employers' associations, trade unions, human rights and women's organizations, universities, research institutions and the media. It recommends that the present concluding observations be disseminated in an appropriate form at the local community level to enable their implementation. In addition, the Committee requests the State party to continue to disseminate the Convention, the Optional Protocol thereto and relevant jurisprudence, in addition to the Committee's general recommendations, to all stakeholders.

Technical assistance

48. **The Committee recommends that the State party link the implementation of the Convention to its development efforts and that it avail itself of regional or international technical assistance in this respect.**

Ratification of other treaties

49. **The Committee notes that the adherence of the State party to the nine major international human rights instruments[1] would enhance the enjoyment by women of their human rights and fundamental freedoms in all aspects of life. The Committee therefore encourages the State party to consider ratifying the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, to which it is not yet a party. It also invites the State party to consider ratifying the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.**

Follow-up to the concluding observations

50. **The Committee requests the State party to provide, within two years, written information on the steps taken to implement the recommendations contained in paragraphs 9 (b) and 25 (a), (c) and (e) above.**

Preparation of the next report

51. **The Committee invites the State party to submit its sixth periodic report in March 2019.**

52. **The Committee requests the State party to follow the harmonized guidelines on reporting under the international human rights treaties, including guidelines on a common core document and treaty-specific documents (HRI/GEN/2/Rev.6, chap. I).**

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[1] The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; the Convention on the Rights of the Child; the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families; the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance; and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.